

Comparison of Alternatives

The final part of the Guide provides a summary comparison of key management actions proposed in each alternative.

	Alternative D (No Action)	Alternative A (Preferred)	Alternative B (Development)	Alternative C (Conservation)
Management Objectives of the Alternative	Maintain present uses by continuing current management as prescribed in the Diamond Mountain and Book Cliffs RMPs.	Direction is generally broad and accommodates a wide variety of values and uses. The planning area would be managed to provide a sustainable flow of resources for human use, while protecting important watersheds and providing viable populations of native and desirable on-native plants species, and to provide wildlife habitat and opportunities for recreation use.	Provide for resource uses but emphasizes oil and gas development, where feasible. Renewable resources would be protected by balancing the development of mineral resources with focused and prudent mitigation measures.	The natural succession of ecosystems would be allowed to proceed in select management areas. The alternative would strongly emphasize maintenance of watershed condition, species viability, properly function ecosystems, and a reduction of habitat fragmentation.

	Alternative D (No Action)	Alternative A (Preferred)	Alternative B (Development)	Alternative C (Conservation)
Oil and Gas Leasing	Public lands would be available for leasing subject to the following lease terms and conditions.			
	Standard: 918,315 ac. Timing: 617,715 ac. No Surface: 136,930 ac. Closed: 52,540 ac.	Standard: 983,905 ac. Timing: 796,955 ac. No Surface: 69,302 ac. Closed: 63,839 ac.	Standard: 1,113,116 ac. Timing: 706,281 ac. No Surface: 42,053 ac. Closed: 52,550 ac.	Standard: 858,619 ac. Timing: 768,466 ac. No Surface: 58,670 ac. Closed: 228,246 ac.
	<i>Summary</i> 188,550 acres of split estate under the Hill Creek Extension would not be available for leasing. Approximately 1.5 million acres available for lease under standard or timing stipulations. A total of 5,858 oil and gas wells are predicted.	The Hill Creek Extension split estate would be available for leasing. Overall, there is a 14 % increase of lands available under standard or timing stipulations as compared to Alt. D (the second highest number of acres of lands available for leasing among all of the alternatives) A 1.5% increase in the number of predicted oil and gas wells compared to Alt. D.	The Hill Creek Extension split estate would be available. Overall, an 18% increase in land available under standard or timing stipulations (the highest number of acres of any alternative) A 2.2% increase in predicted wells compared to Alt. D.	The Hill Creek Extension would be available therefore a 6% increase in lands available under standard or timing stipulations compared to Alt. D. Would have the least number of wells (0.4% decrease compared to Alt. D) of any alternative.

	Alternative D (No Action)	Alternative A (Preferred)	Alternative B (Development)	Alternative C (Conservation)
OHV	Designate all public lands as Open, Closed, or Limited to off-highway use as follows.			
	Open: 789,859 ac. Limited: 887,859 ac. Closed: 50,388 ac. Existing Routes:	Open: 6,202 ac. Limited: 1,643,475 ac. Closed: 75,845 ac. Designated Routes: 4,860 miles	Open: 5,434. Limited: 1,659,901 ac. Closed: 60,187 ac. Designated Routes: 4,860 miles	Open: 5,434 ac. Limited: 1,353,529 ac. Closed: 366,559 ac. Designated Routes: 4,707 miles
Summary	<i>Approximately 45% of the lands open to cross-country travel. Most of the remaining lands open to OHV use on existing routes. (route designation would not take occur) 3% of lands closed; in several locations but not all WSAs.</i>	<i>Cross-country travel limited to several managed open areas. Number of acres in open category reduced to 6,202. Most lands (95%) placed in limited category where use continues on designated routes. A trail system of 4,860 miles has been initially identified. 5% of lands closed; including all WSAs.</i>	<i>Similar to Alt. A. The primary difference is that slightly less lands would be open to cross-country travel due to a smaller Devil's Playground Open Area. Closures in White River and Sand Wash put-in areas smaller than outlined in Alt. A.</i>	<i>78% of lands placed in limited category where use continues on designated trails. 21% of lands closed including all WSAs and other areas where wilderness characteristics have been inventoried. Managed open areas the same as Alt. B.</i>

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Recreation	<p>Provide a wide range of accessible and desirable recreation experiences, settings and opportunities for visitor and local resident giving consideration to other resource values.</p> <p>Identify and manage Special Recreation Management Areas as follows.</p>			
	Four existing SRMAs	Four existing SRMAs of which 2 are expanded in size Three new SRMAs	Four existing SRMAs	Four existing SRMAs of which 2 are expanded in size Three new SRMAs
<i>Summary</i>	<i>The four existing SRMAs are carried forward. No new Backcountry Byways or trail improvements.</i>	<i>4 existing SRMAs carried forward, two of which (Nine Mile Canyon and Brown's Park) are expanded. Three new SRMA are established (White River, Blue Mountain, and Book Cliffs). 400 miles of non-motorized trails improved. Three new Backcountry Byways.</i>	<i>Four existing SRMAs carried forward. Three new Backcountry Byways. Improvements on 400 mile of non-motorized trails.</i>	<i>Same as Alt. A except that no Backcountry Byways identified.</i>

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Special Status Species	<p>Conserve and recover all special status species and their habitats. Cooperate with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resource in managing species and their habitat. Employ strategies to avoid or reduce fragmenting habitat.</p>			
	Spatial and seasonal buffers around raptor nests.	Raptors managed under Best Management Practices with seasonal and spatial buffers comparable to USFWS guidelines; medications allowed if specific criteria are met.	Raptors managed at a level less restrictive than USFWS guideline, except for T&E species and ferruginous hawks.	USFWS spatial and seasonal buffers would be implemented around nests and nest territory.
	Spatial and seasonal buffers around sage grouse leks and nesting areas.	Strategic Management Plan for sage grouse (June 2002) adopted as baseline.	Spatial and seasonal buffers around sage grouse leks and nesting grounds.	Connelly's guidelines for management of sage grouse and their habitat for spatial and seasonal buffers around leks.
Summary	<i>Seasonal and spatial buffers for 20 raptor species remain in affect in Diamond Mountain portion of VPA. Book Cliffs area unspecified. Current management applied to sage grouse.</i>	<i>Seasonal and spatial buffers for raptor under guidance of new Best Management Practices protocol. Colorado cutthroat trout reintroduced into nine streams. Strategic Plan (June 2002) adopted for sage grouse.</i>	<i>Raptors management at less restrictive levels than Alt. A Spatial and seasonal buffers for sage grouse leks.</i>	<i>USFWS seasonal and spatial buffer for raptor species (more restrictive than Alt. B). Cutthroat trout reintroduced. Connelly's spatial and seasonal buffers for sage grouse.</i>

	Alternative D (No Action)	Alternative A (Preferred)	Alternative B (Development)	Alternative C (Conservation)
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	Consider designating managing areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC) as required by FLMPA.			
	Designate seven (existing) ACECs totaling 165,944 acres.	Designate ten (7 existing, 3 new) ACECs totaling 348,016 acres.	Designate seven (6 existing, 1 new) totaling 170,887 acres.	Designate 13 ACECs (7 existing, 6 new) totaling 681,310 acres.
	<i>Summary</i> Existing ACECs carried forward.	All existing ACECs carried forward, with two expanded in size. Approximately 18% of VPA designated as ACEC.	Six existing ACECs carried forward (Lower Green River eliminated). The size of Brown's Park ACEC reduced by 65%.	All existing ACECs carried forward with two expanded. Six new ACECs. Approx. 39% of VPA designated as ACEC.

Wild and Scenic Rivers	Determine eligibility of rivers under National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act criteria. Assess eligibility and determine segments suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.			
	Suitable: two segments, 52 miles	Suitable: four segments, 72 miles	Suitable: two segments, 52 miles.	Suitable: 11 segments; 216 miles.
	<i>Summary</i> <i>Upper and Lower Green River suitable recommendations carried forward. Other river segments retain eligibility, but no suitability determinations made.</i>	<i>In addition to existing recommendations, two segments of White River (B as wild and C as scenic) recommended suitable. 72 total miles suitable.</i>	<i>Same as Alt. D except no eligibility status retained.</i>	<i>In addition to existing recommendations, nine new segments (164 miles) recommended as wild, scenic or recreational. 216 total miles suitable.</i>

	Alternative D (No Action)	Alternative A (Preferred)	Alternative B (Development)	Alternative C (Conservation)
Wilderness Study Areas	Manage six existing WSAs in a manner that does not impair wilderness suitability. Close WSAs to oil and gas leasing per Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Act of 1987. Manage WSAs as VRM Class I. Close WSAs to OHV use (except Alt. D-No Action).			
<i>Summary</i>	<i>OHV use allowed on inventoried way I some WSAs. VRM classifications as prescribed in existing land use plans.</i>	<i>All WSAs closed to OHV use and managed as VRM Class I. If released by Congress, management applies as prescribed in this plan.</i>	<i>Same as Alt. A.</i>	<i>Same as Alt. A.</i>

Livestock Grazing	<p>Provide for the use, improvement and development of the range for livestock and wildlife grazing and restore and improve public rangelands to properly functioning conditions.</p> <p>Authorized conversion in kind of livestock on a case-by-case basis when justified through environmental analysis.</p>			
<i>Summary</i>	<p><i>Seasons of use would be based on the current permitted use. Grazing on many allotments would continue during critical growth periods (April/May) of forage species.</i></p>	<p><i>Seasons of use would be determined based on plant phenology to ensure that the physiological requirements of plants would be met. Deferrals and other tools would be used to facilitate an adaptive management approach.</i></p>	<p><i>Grazing on many allotments would continue during critical growth periods (April/May) of forage species with of deferment.</i></p>	<p><i>The determination of season of use would be based on how grazing was adjudicated in the 1960's. It is similar to Alternative A, but lacks the discretion to allow adaptive management approaches to react to change.</i></p>

Where to Find Detailed Information in the RMP: Chapter 2: Table 2.5 Summary of Impacts, Complete chart outlining a summary of the impacts associated with all of the proposed actions. (page 2-81 to 2-114) Chapter 4: Environmental Consequences, The 358-page chapter of the RMP which provides detailed analysis of the environmental consequences of the actions proposed in each alternative. (page 4-1 to 4-358)